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OVER THE VAR.

DEEPLY embosomed in a sweeping bay, whose waters surpass in their clear depths even the pellucid azure of the Mediterranean, lies a fair, white-walled town, whose palatial villas stretch for miles along the sunny beach. Close by, to the north and east, ascend the lofty peaks and olive-terraced slopes of the Maritime Alps; to the westward, irregular and purple, are seen the Estrelle Mountains, like a giant wall; and the rocky promontory that shuts in the view on the side of Italy stands out against the horizon, with edges as sharply chiseled as if wrought by the art of the sculptor. Landward, there is a rich confusion of orange-groves and gardens, and trellised vines and deep pine-woods, and all the luxuriant, over-brimming richness of the vegetation of the south. Cradled in this lovely landscape, like a precious pearl in a golden setting, and basking under a cloudless sky and a brilliant sun, lies the city of Nice, the last acquisition of his majesty Napoleon III.—an Italian town but yesterday; to-day, a town of France. It is a prize worth the winning, this birthplace of Garibaldi, this flower of the world-renowned Riviera del Ponente. Statistically speaking, it has 50,000 inhabitants, a tunny-fishery, an extensive coasting-trade, a very large production of olive-oil, fruit, and purple Comté wine.

In a political sense, it is the key of Italy.

It is the most fashionable and frequented of all European winter watering-places; and to a lover of beautiful scenery, as the emperor is acknowledged to be even by the tart dowagers of the Faubourg, there is doubtless a charm in acquiring one of the very fairest and most bewitching gems of the purple Mediterranean. Let us do Nice justice—let us begin at the beginning. The Var is, or was, before that pugnacious sovereign, the *Ré Galantuomo*, Victor Emmanuel, bartered away his old dominions, the frontier of Italy. It is from three to four miles from the town of Nice, that broad, turbulent river, perhaps twice as broad as the Thames at Richmond, but full of shingly shoals and dry banks of sand, between which rush furious channels of foaming yellow water. More than one tourist has tried to ford the Var on horseback, and has perished in the attempt. The natives have an instinctive respect for the broad, capricious river. It is not navigable, not fit for the oarsman nor for the fly-fisher. Its one natural use is, to keep out Gauls from Italy; and that use, thanks to the treaty of Villafranca, is at an end. This dangerous river is spanned by an enormously long, rickety wooden bridge. At either end are gates. A French sentry keeps the westward gate, and, till lately, a Piedmontese

douanier maintained a less warlike watch and ward at what might fairly be called the Door of Italy. The French gates were closed at 7 P.M. every evening; and travellers from Italy, in spite of passports and safe-conducts—the ‘most favoured nation’ not excepted—were rigidly locked out. When across the Var, on the Italian side, you have a pleasant drive to Nice, and the choice of two roads. Landward, you have the tall cane-brakes, where every reedy stem is tipped with a spear-shaped leaf; the maize-fields, rich with gigantic grain; the white cottages of peasants; the gray stone-walls of immense gardens. On the other route, you have the sea. Let us choose the sea. It is pleasant to bowl along a road as smooth and white as sand and powdered shells can make it; on one's right hand the magnificent bay, with a score of white-winged feluccas spreading their fantastic canvas and long lateen yards to the breeze, and ‘clawing’ out so as to round the promontory. There is a patch of snowy foam far out beyond the sandy point, which shews where the great tunny shoals are running in, and every red-capped, bronze-faced fisherman is up, sharpening his spear, hauling at his boat, getting out his nets, while his wife bustles around, and his brown-visaged, bright-eyed brood clap their hands, and pray to be taken out to sea too. We shall see plenty of the tunny fish presently; let us roll on to the town.

On our left are endless villas of every size and style, from the conventual dwelling of the Dowager Empress of All the Russias, to the white-washed and green-shuttered cottage, which Captain Smith, of the *Ballinasloe* Bombardiers, has hired for the winter at a hundred francs a month, and which the complainant natives call the ‘Palazzo Smees.’ Let us hasten to own that the gallant bombardier's house is exceptionally small, and that most of the villas are ample and commodious residences, richly furnished, gay with marble, stucco, and frescoed walls, and enclosed in the prettiest gardens, so that the white blossoms of the bridal orange-trees peep in at the windows, to the delight of the young lady-inmates; and later, the golden globes thrust their ripe fragrance into the open casements, to the gratification of all British school-boys spending their holidays at Nice. Now we are in the town—that town that shone like a fairy crescent-shaped city far off along the sea-line, as we drove from the Var Bridge; and as we enter the shady streets, a sort of disappointment falls upon us like a chill. Dear, dear me, is *this* all? Are these the streets? Are these the shops? I thought they would be a sort of eastern bazaars, crowded from floor to ceiling with all that is gay, grand, and splendid. Have a little patience, fellow-traveller. The way

to enjoy Nice, or most other southern towns that I am acquainted with, is to get outside it—just outside it, only a little way off, and sit down, and fall in love with it, and take its portrait. No, the shops are not equal to those of Paris, or even to those of Trieste or Vienna; and the streets are a little narrow and dark; and the pavement of most part of the town, which must surely have been constructed of little petrified pears, is more profitable to your chiropodist—if you patronise corn-doctors—than to yourself: but never mind; let me act as guide and showman.

That marble shop, full of pure white statuary from Carrara, and mottled Tuscan marbles, and those wonderful *stiff* straw-hats, which ladies from France, and England, and Russia buy so many of, and all the straw and ivory gimcracks, is surely worth looking at. Then Visconti's great coal library; did you ever see such a library before? Behold it, with its orange and almond garden, its huge reading-saloon, and its general character of refrigeration, as if it were a literary ice-house. You read your *Times* or your *Galignani* there, and forget the heat. That is a confectioner, who is no mean artist on sugar; yonder worthy fellow is cunning in wood-mosaics, and his inlaid tables are sent even to New York. There! I am exhausted in my career as counsel for the defence. I give you up the rest of the Nice shops; they are nothing to boast of, I own it; but what of that? This is not a commercial city. It is a grand old watering-place, the oldest in the south, for did not Sultan Djem (or Zem), Bajazet's rebellious younger brother, come here, and live here, and love the place so well that he wrote Turkish verses in its praise, the originals of which I never met with, but trust they surpass the mediocrity of their French translation.

People do not come to Nice to 'shop,' they come to bask in the sun. Presently, we will go forth, and bask in it too. We cross the square, and there is the barrack, looking like a theatre; and there the theatre, strongly resembling a barrack. However, in that theatre you may hear some of the best singers of Italy give effect to the best operas; and the inside, as usual in Italy, surpasses the exterior. That cool shadowy building, where the sentinels are pacing, and the gorgeous footmen lounge like tropic birds, is the royal palace. Very rarely the king of Sardinia sleeps in it for a night or two—twice in a reign, possibly. The intendant of the province has those snug quarters to himself, but a tribunal of justice has found a niche on the ground-floor.

Now for the old town, the true Nice of Sultan Zem, and Montfort, and Montesquieu. We plunge into the dark, and it is some time before our eyes grow accustomed to the dimness, and we can discern objects accurately. Even then it requires great stoical philosophy to bear the sudden transitions from broad smooth flags, such as Florence and Padua are paved with, to sharp little cobble-stoned pavements, that lace-rate and bruise the feet, and turn our neat Paris boots into instruments of torture. But what a feast of colour, of dappled light and shade, of nationality written in mute signs, of the quaint and the wonderful, does that old town present! It is almost oriental in its arrangements, like some petty eastern city, too small to boast its bazaars, and exposing its wares on each window-sill and threshold. In Old Nice, every house is a shop, every shop is a stall. Here, fruit is piled up in almost fabulous plenty: great melons striped gold and green; Barbary figs, all prickled over like hedgehogs; the tamer figs of Italy, red and purple and green, luscious, ripe, and bursting, so as to shew the yellow seeds and tempting fruit; mountains of grapes, piles of brown carobs, fresh dates, almonds just off the tree, pistachio-nuts, olives, the peach and the pear and the pine, and all the family of Pomona. There are flowers of every tint and hue, and seeds for gardens, and huge golden ears of ripe Indian corn,

masses of yellow globes on a stout stem; and beyond are fish of twenty new kinds; and then there is a heap of game, all sorts of birds, called, in defiance of ornithological professors, 'pheasants,' indiscriminately. Wonderful varieties of the pheasant, certainly! There are red-legged partridges, and our brown friend whose relations live among us in Britain, the slim-legged quail, the woodcock, snipe, mallard, the true gold-plumaged pheasant, the black game, too, all labelled alike, up to a great black-feathered fowl of prodigious dimensions. What is this noble fellow that you poise and weigh admiringly? He is a huge bird, dark plumed, with white tips to the feathers. He comes, they tell you, from the pine-forests about the Alpine Pass of Tenda, six thousand feet above the sea. Is he a heron, or a sea-eagle, or a prize turkey? 'Fagione, Milordo, Fagione!' is all the dealer can say. Pheasant again! Bah! O for a scientific friend to tell us at a glance that the bird is a capercaillie of the Alps!

There are other stalls besides those that deal in creature-comforts. Yonder is an establishment where Greek caps, gay Catalan scarfs, gaudy shawls and kerchiefs, and pretty toys of Greece, Spain, Tangiers, and Egypt, are being retailed to the black-eyed *contadinos*. It would not surprise me to learn that the old crone who presides, she with the piercing eyes, heavy earrings, and yellow handkerchief twisted round her head, was a native of Marseille, and not unconnected with the smuggling interest. See, she catches sight of us, and offers us tobacco—choice Latakia—amazing cigars—just imported. I suspect the Royal Dogana profited little by that importation. On through the villainously paved dark lanes, where the tall houses almost meet overhead. Even here the vine takes root and grows. You see the interlaced tendrils stretch from gable to gable, and make a green net between you and the strip of blue sky. There is a surprising crush of people, and you are jostled as if in a country fair: blue-jacketed or brown-jacketed mountaineers, with red sashes round their loins, and felt hats; young girls, proud of the gold cross on their bosoms, and the bright kerchief that wreaths their pitch-black hair; noisy urchins, unearthly hags, with fire in their eyes, and curses never very far off their lips, push you to right and left. On come, gesticulating the while, a troop of evil-visaged 'loafers,' brawling and squabbling as the wine of the *taberno* mounts to their heads. It is better to leave a clear passage to that band of dissolute swaggers, with their bloodshot eyes, and loose black hair, and the handle of a knife peeping out of every crimson sash. They can use knives as well as exhibit them. The advocate Lebruno, who was wantonly murdered, a year ago, at his own door, perished by the stilettoes of just such a gang of Italian Mohocks, and the two assassins who were convicted, escaped the extreme penalty of the law, and were 'commuted' to the galleys. To say the truth, these idle, gambling, stabbing loungers are the curse and terror of Old Nice; and if the imperial police can tame them, there will be one advantage in the annexation, after all.

Which way, now? There is a most embarrassing choice of routes, certainly. Shall we go up the Turin Road, with the brawling torrent-river on our left hand, and mount the slopes of the Tenda Pass? Or shall we climb the mountain, up which the road to Genoa winds like a twisting snake, through woods of pine, and terraces above terraces, where the silver-gray olive-trees spread their glossy leaves like unpolished silver to the sun? If we choose the latter, we may climb on and on, higher and higher, through gray rocks and black pines, and hedges of tall roses; while the Alpine peaks tower up above us, higher and higher, bluer and more blue yet, until we get to the lichens and the mosses, and see a spotless helmet of snow on the cones afar off. In mid-winter, I have ascended that steep road for a mile or two, and

reached the deep snow, which lay white and calm all around; while Nice and its valley beneath were positively bathed and steeped in a golden glory of sunbeams and warmth, and the roses still bloomed, and the birds still sang, close to the white wintry covering of the hills. But now, instead of such an ascent, we can pass those gay *cafés* and that lime-shaded parade, and before us is the port of Nice. A pretty little port enough, with its two or three English or Yankee merchantmen, looking perfect monsters of naval architecture, in comparison with the picturesque mob of gaudily painted feluccas, zebeques, and other lateen-rigged craft that lie anchored around, their blue striped sails negligently swinging, in not ungraceful festoons, from the long and tapered yards; while the red-capped, ear-ringed crew are busy with their garb and oily stews, and singing in *patois* over their sour wine. Slim and swift craft are those feluccas, elegant of rig and sharp of stem, and admirably adapted for smooth water and light winds, as indeed are their swarthy, lively crews. But in heavy weather, or in one of those terribly sudden Mediterranean squalls, one would rather, I fancy, be a shipmate of Captain Brown yonder, of and from Liverpool; or of that loosely hung, resolute-eyed Boston skipper, the gallant Captain Molasses, who is smoking beside the binnacle of his rakish bark. The fishermen are good studies for a painter, with skins like bronze, eyes of sloe-like blackness, wide white trousers of almost Moorish amplitude, red sashes and caps, boots and jackets of a sort of chocolate colour. See that old Triton, who offers us a basketful of the choice *dattolè di mare*, and hesitates to name his price, lest he should ask less than Milor would give, were the tariff but higher. Those rare shell-fish—those sea-slates in their crustaceous covering—are worth a good price, after all, not only for their flavour, but for the wonderful trouble taken in boring and blasting, so as to get them out of their rocky bed, just beneath the high reef, out at sea. Nothing but gunpowder, judiciously applied in tiny dribblets, can sap that rock where the *dattolè* burrow, and of course care is needed lest the dainty fish be destroyed along with their stronghold. We will go on to Villafranca, over this fine broad road of new construction, commanded by a fort that is perched on the stony hill above. Or shall we prefer the old picturesque path along the face of the precipitous rock, rising up and up in irregular curves, and overlooking the deep sea, which moans and splashes among the caverns below? It is a fine view that we have from that steep path, but the footing is none of the best, nor of the widest: we have a wall of rock above us, and a sheer descent below us; and see, here come in Indian file a score of mules and asses, each descending with his brace of panniers slung, in which the animal has carried up mortar, and stone, and brick, to strengthen the fort on the cliff. Mercy on us! the path is not wide enough for us all; however, we flatten ourselves against the rock, and the mules and their long-eared relatives brush by us, the baskets just nudging us. How fearlessly the sure-footed brutes walk, or amble, on the extreme edge of the path, close above the tremendous precipice that it makes one dizzy to gaze down! The creatures are trained to walk thus, that their loads may not strike the wall. Had we attempted to pass them on the outside, they would probably have pushed us over, for a mule is not easily turned from its course.

We are up now, and a pleasing surprise awaits us. Nestling among the Maritime Mountains, shut in by a green promontory, a perfect natural breakwater, is the famous harbour of Villafranca—a sort of basin full of deep green water, still and sheltered, and admirably protected by hill-forts from assault. A comfortable resting-place for a squadron this, in time of war! This is the port, the acquisition of which

by Russia, not long ago, caused such excitement and uneasiness to our politicians. There are the quarantine buildings over which the Muscovites hoisted their flag; there are their store-houses; there lay their fleet during twelve months. Where are they now? Just as one bird of prey sometimes serves a writ of ejectment on another, so, at the coming in of the French eagle, the double-headed one abandoned its new eyry, and flew off screaming. No sooner had the vanguard of Napoleon crossed Mont Cenis, than the Russians gleaned up all their stores, hauled down their flag, and left Villafranca to be the spoil of a stronger than they. But they had held possession of it long enough to give their neighbours some idea of the working of that loudly vaunted system of Russian civilisation, of which we have most of us heard a good deal. Two deserters—one of them a boatswain, the other an ordinary seaman—were knouted to death on board the Russian flag-ship, and the bodies were flung into the sea. The Sardinian authorities were of course powerless to interfere, but I remember the looks of disgust with which the Russian naval officers were greeted at the king's ball a day or two after, as they swarmed around the rooms in their tight blue coats and bee-hive epaulets. The affair was soon forgotten, though.

We are on our way now to Carabacel, where the prettiest villas are built, and where the handsomest gardens are wooing the hot sun. The climate of Nice is ultra-Italian enough; Florence and Rome are chilly in comparison, but Carabacel has an African climate, and an African luxuriance of vegetation. With what power the white sunlight falls on those rocky terraces, and stone-walls, and stately houses, painted with gay frescoes of marine or mountain scenery! The dust chokes us as we pass through the deep lanes; and very welcome is the plash of the fountain yonder, in the courtyard of the villa. We peep through the iron gates, and see a fair basin of white Carrara marble, and a shower of sparkling drops rising and falling, half hidden by the gold and green of the oranges and pomegranate shrubs that cluster jealously around it. The tall garden-walls are capped, not with churlish broken glass or surly spikes, but with a multitude of scarlet geraniums, growing in the earth between the stones, and forming a broad stripe of bright colour along the top. Carabacel is the paradise of lizards. How boldly the little brown fellows, lithe and slim, sport over the hot stones, and dart after the flies with lambent tongues, and eyes that shine like fire itself! There is a cane-brake that would grace a Brazilian landscape; and there, an avenue of roses; and here, a garden paved with buds of every hue—blue, lilac, pink, white, and carmine. A little way on, and we come to a stately dwelling with Corinthian portico, and fountains flickering in the sunlight. You see the white limbs of the marble statues peeping through broad green leaves all over the garden, like real nymphs and dryads of the Golden period. The open windows give you a glimpse of lofty and vast rooms, gorgeous with gilding, and crystal lamps, and rare pictures, and marbles, and armour, and all that modern Aladins can collect by the magic of wealth and taste.

The fruit is in wondrous profusion here, where water is the only element needed to insure the utmost fertility, the sun doing the rest. You are scarcely surprised, now, to hear that twenty oranges may be bought for as many centesimi; and that a man must be poor indeed who cannot get his daily food, so he be content with rice and water-melons. Cart-loads of casks, drawn by lazy oxen, jolt and rumble past us; one hogshhead is imperfectly secured, and the purple wine trickles out in great drops, and makes a trail of wine in the dust of the road, that thirstily drinks it up. But wine is cheap—too cheap for the sobriety of the population—and nobody rocks

of the loss. Perhaps the most surprising sight which Carabagel affords, is the profusion of cactus flowers. There are great hedges of cactus surrounding orange-gardens and pastures, there are tufts of cactus on every rock, there are wildernesses of cactus in every neglected corner. No puny plants are these rich tinted natives of the tropics, which seem greedily to drink in the rays of the broad sun, but superb specimens, equal to those of Barbary in beauty, and proudly exhibiting their monstrous blossoms of flaming scarlet and crimson, while their huge spiked leaves repel the intruder. Indeed, Nice has a climate that is more African than Italian; and when you go on to Tuscany, you will miss the un-European luxuriance which that fair Riviera di Ponente affords.

Monaco, and especially San Remo, eclipse Nice in palm-trees; but see, there are some handsome trees in yonder walled garden, and the happy owner has gilded the bark of the largest palm, until, as the sun flashes on it, you might take it for a spray pillar of Solomon's temple. How gracefully the palm-branches wave in the south wind, like magnified marabout feathers; and how the very scales of the bark, and the peculiar appearance of the trunks of these transplanted orientals, spirit us away with resistless power to other lands—the Syrian mountains, the yellow deserts, the dim Nile, and its brooding sphinxes! We pass on, and are in the Place d'Armes; and the strains of military music make our pulses beat quicker and higher, as a column marches by with swift yet measured tramp—Piedmontese infantry, a war-worn regiment that fought at the Tchernaya against the Russians, and at Solferino against the Austrians. The men have almost all got the Crimean decorations shining on their breasts, and you can see that the horses of the field-officers are Arabians, picked up in the anti-Muscovite campaign. A fine body of men enough, two or three inches taller than an average battalion of Frenchmen, but more languid. You can tell, at a glance, that they lack the fiery *elan* which the Gaul possesses. Yet there are Sardinian natives who have *elan* enough, and spirit, and faith, and self-sacrifice enough, and who are equal to the task of reviving a dead heroism, and inspiring mettle into a generation of slaves. That little house before us, with its low stone-porch, is the house where Garibaldi was born. Alas! the very dwelling where the hero first saw the light is now Italian no longer. And that other small abode attracts not a little interest, for the sake of the exiled family it shelters—a family imprisoned, evil-treated, driven away from home and friends, for the crime of reading a Protestant Bible—the Madiati. Not far off is the British chapel, an unpretending white building of stone. Tolerance is the order of the day now; but when that chapel was first reared, the permission from government to erect and open it was one of the most extraordinary and insulting documents ever promulgated in modern Europe. It set forth that there were many English residents in the town; that they were well-conducted folks who merited indulgence; that they had the singular absurdity (*bêtise*) of appertaining to the Protestant faith; and that, therefore, under certain restrictions, the king was graciously pleased to permit them to worship according to their usages. Those were the days when Charles Albert was alive and priest-ridden, when monks and bishops governed the royal councils; but those days are gone. Even the poor Vaudois now have their little chapel, and are suffered to pray in peace. As for the Russians, their rites are celebrated at Nice with uncommon splendour; and, as I live, there is one of their ecclesiastics, a strange-looking papas, in a high square velvet cap, a gown, and long curled hair flowing behind on his shoulders, while the front of his head is shaved! How he bows, and folds his arms, and bends his knees, as the imperial carriage comes rolling over the bridge, with the empress seated in it, drawn by four fine thoroughbred grays, and preceded by a mounted

chasseur, with a silver-hilted sword, who calls to the people to clear the way!

The dowager-empress, the widow of our old foe Niehola, or, as the natives of Nice call her (not understanding imperial titles), the Duchess of Russia, has brought much custom to Nice. See, as her carriage sweeps up to that villa where the sentries present arms, how many hats fly off, how many Tatar heads are bowed before her! There is a powerful Russian colony now, with its archduchesses and its counts and barons, and its princes and princesses by the score. There always has been a very considerable British colony, tempted, some by health, more by gaiety, and most by the novelty of basking in almost eternal sunshine, and dining on Christmas Day with windows open, flowers in bloom, and green pease, fresh gathered, to match the traditional *rosbif*. Now the Russians come in increasing swarms, year by year, to elbow the Britishers off their old accustomed parade, and to make lodgings dear. Superb are the abodes of some of these Tatar dignitaries, richly furnished apartments, gorgeous with gilding, with frescoes, with apocryphal Titians, armour, malachite, velvet, crystal, and Bohemian glass. The natives are dazzled by this new and profitable incursion of the Barbarians. The level drive in front of the sea—a road as smooth as rolled sand and be—and fringed by a hundred villas, bears the name of the 'Promenade des Anglais.' Perhaps in a little while it may be called the 'Promenade des Russes.' Muscovites and Yankees are now in the ascendant in all European watering-places. Let us saunter for a little time on the shady Castle Hill—that Castle Hill from which Montfort, a poor Piedmontese gentleman, contrived to repulse the janizaries of Sultan Solymán and the Frenchmen of Francis I. Montfort had but the citizens of Nice and the mountaineers of Tenda to help him against the conquerors of Rhodes and the devastators of Germany. And Garibaldi must be as much the 'man for the occasion' as Montfort, were he but free to defend his birthplace. What a pretty walk we have up the steep conical hill, deeply wooded from base to summit! At the foot, we stop to listen to a nasal chant of litanies. A band of ghostly nuns, in white carmelite robes, are following a dead sister to the grave, and the garrison follow with trailed arms; and there are friars, red, brown, black, gray, all chanting, all bearded and shaven of head, all with tall wax-candles flickering in the breeze as they sputter and burn. Scarcely has the singing died away, when a drum beats hoarsely, and a crowd gathers at once. Look! a party of rough mountaineers, in brown suits of serge, and with hats bedecked with ribbons. Their guns are slung over their backs. They are exhibiting the fruits of their chase, and holding out their broad hats for coin with eager gestures. What is the spotted creature, black and gold, that they hold up to public view? See the blood on its shoulder—its long talons, its lithe sinewy limbs, and glossy coat, and round feline head. Is it a panther? No, but a lynx—terror of the mountain-farmer, and destroyer of sheep. It is the nearest approach to a tiger which Europe affords, and would be a formidable customer were it wounded and desperate, no doubt. It is very scarce, but half-African Nice hides a few among the hills. Ha! here come our jovial tunny-fishers. They have had a good day. They proudly shew their stained spears and besmirched clothes, while after them pant a crowd of boys and women, carrying, with whoops and laughter, in nets, in sails, in matting, in anything, the prize of fat and dark-hued fish, the spoils of the enterprise. There will be much oil in Nice. But another cry rises, and the capricious mob rushes off towards a distant cloud of smoke. Another fire! There are almost as many fires in Old Nice as in New York; and no wonder, for in the old town it is a well-known fact that the chimneys are mostly of wood.

Up the hill now, up through the stone-pines, and the cork-trees, and the Aleppo pines, and the Indian oaks, and all the rare trees whose dark evergreen foliage clothes the hill with rifle-green. From the top of the Castle Hill we have a view that rewards us well—a view such as will gladden the hearts of the emperor and empress, when they ascend it, on their southern excursion, to view the fair broad lands that they have gained—a view that Victor Emmanuel should sigh to remember. When the king of Sardinia left Nice after his brief visit in the winter of 1857-58, he was followed with prayers, tears, enthusiasm by the entire population. Triumphal arches, fireworks, illuminations; not only galaxies of light on palace and mansion, but pale poor lamps in the window of the meanest hovel: the love and good-will of the lowly and the wealthy alike were freely given to the *Ré Galantuomo*; and they have been bartered away for market-value. Nice is French soil now—that fair flower is torn from the peninsula: even Garibaldi is only an Italian under sufferance!

STREET RAILROADS.

PROGRESS is at once the problem and desideratum of our day. How to get on?—in teaching, in trade, in travelling—is the question on the lips of most men, and in the thoughts of all. One would think, on a superficial glance, that of mechanical progress, at least, enough had been made of late years to satisfy even those of the most exacting disposition. Railways and telegraphic communication have wondrously facilitated public intercourse; and the pneumatic dispatch system promises still further to annihilate time and space. Nay, when some timid spirits, a few months since, ventured to remonstrate against the exportation of coal to France, relying on the dictum of an eminent statesman, that our supply would only suffice for the consumption of three hundred years, they were promptly put down by the assurance, that 'long before that time science would have found a substitute;' and the discoveries in which the last three centuries have been fertile, may well excuse, if they do not altogether warrant, this bold assertion.

But the facility of locomotion, and the apparent freedom of circulation which exists in every direction, are subject to one great impediment. Travel through the country at what rate we may, in cities of any magnitude there is a *ne plus ultra* of speed, or rather of slowness, which baffles the attempts of the most skilful voyager to overcome it, and revenges itself on all who may seek to accelerate the traffic by producing what is known as 'a choke.' Railways entering a town but aggravate the difficulty, by swelling the numbers of the struggling crowd. One may scamper far and wide through the country at the heels of the fiery horse, with a fleetness exceeding that of the Bedouin of the desert; but, like him, on approaching the dwellings of men, one becomes sensible of a feeling of restraint, and is struck with an utter abhorrence of narrow ways. Propositions innumerable have, from time to time, been suggested for mitigating this evil. In London, as the heart of the empire, it has been most felt; but complaints have not been unheard from Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Birkenhead, and other great centres of manufacturing industry. In the metropolis, things have now arrived at such a pitch that stagnation has almost supervened. A vehicle taken from any point of the city to the West End, occupies nearly an hour in the transit; while the removal of old Westminster Bridge, by the effectual bar which it opposes to Thames navigation, nearly equalises the journey in point of time, should the person choose to travel by water. It is a notorious fact, that if two gentlemen leave their offices together, one of them, by the special arrangements which the railways have

entered into, will have almost accomplished his evening trip to Brighton, a distance of fifty miles, by the time that the other has reached his own hall-door at Kensington or Belgravia, a distance, as the crow flies, of less than four miles. It is obvious that these delays cannot merely be confined to passenger-traffic. Lumbering vehicles, impeding and impeded, are everywhere met heavily laden, and supposed to be conveying, with all diligence, to their consignees, goods most valuable and urgently required. At every forty or fifty yards, even under favourable circumstances, there is a halt, caused either by the impenetrable ruck of vehicles in advance, by the absorption of portions of the carriage-way for purposes of repair, or through the mere listless habit which horses and men have got into of dozing along, and of stopping every now and then to waken themselves up. The bare outlay for repairing the streets, and for extra wages consequent on these delays, is enormous. Great interest must consequently attach to the experiment with tram-roads, or, as they are called, 'omnibus railways,' which is just being tried in Birkenhead, preparatory to their being extensively adopted in other large towns in England. The advantages which are claimed for the new system of locomotion are: 1. The diminution of friction, the consequent facilitation of the draught of vehicles and reduction of the strain of horses; 2. The diminution of noise and vibration, and the increased comfort both to travellers and inhabitants consequent thereupon; 3. An increased duration of surface, the consequent diminution of the frequency of surface repairs, with the inconveniences attending such reparations.

Minor advantages likewise present themselves, such, for instance, as the prevention to a large extent of the splashing from the wheels of vehicles—a benefit which ladies, remembering the experience of so many months of the present year, will doubtless appreciate. It is contended that a decrease in the number of street-accidents will result from this improvement in the mode of conducting traffic; and, in proof of the assertion, reference is made to the fact that in New York, in the year 1858, thirty-five million of passengers travelled on the lines of omnibuses, and that only twelve persons sustained any injury. It was at first supposed that the tram-roads, by forcing the traffic into continuous lines, would thereby expose it to delays innumerable, as the stoppage of any one omnibus to take up or set down passengers would necessitate a corresponding halt on the part of all the other vehicles which happened to be in the rear; and when these stoppages came to be multiplied by the number of omnibuses in line, the result would be to aggravate instead of to diminish the existing evils. But, on the other hand, it is urged that the rate of travelling will be greatly expedited, and that the stoppages consequently will no longer be felt in the same degree. There can be no doubt, moreover, that where the traffic is very large, in proportion to the width of the streets—as, for example, at London Bridge—a system of driving in lines is enforced, which prevents confusion, enables the vehicles, light or heavy, to proceed without impediment, and exercises practically the same effect as if tram-ways were already laid down. On the new bridge at Westminster, a double tram-road is in operation with very good effect; and in other parts of the metropolis the principle has been conceded by the laying down of tram-stones and channels; but in these, even though of the hardest Aberdeen, Herm, and Guernsey granites, at the end of a year, signs of very perceptible wear are visible. Subjected to heavy and constant traffic, Aberdeen granite, according to the official report, has been found to lose at the rate of four and a half inches in thirty years, in which time the stone may therefore be taken as worn out. The loss upon an iron plate, subject in every respect to the same usage, has been about one-fifth of an inch in nine

years, which is equal to a loss of one inch in forty-five years. From these data, it is assumed that one surface, three-fourths of an inch in depth of iron tramway, will endure twenty-four years. The omnibus traffic forms no inconsiderable portion of that by which the pavement is worn away; and if it can be transferred to a permanent iron surface, without interference with the general thoroughfare, the cost of maintenance, and consequent taxation of the rate-payers, will be sensibly diminished.

The objections which have been most strongly urged to the scheme, consist in the monopoly which it is alleged will be afforded to certain omnibus proprietors, as against all others; in the difficulty of stopping the vehicles when once in motion; in the obstacles which will be presented to gas and water companies in those streets where the tram-way is laid down; and in the interference with traffic which must inevitably take place whilst the tram-road itself is in process of construction. But when these points are carefully and impartially looked into, it will be found that the last consideration is the only one which raises any serious difficulty. Precaution should be taken at the outset by the local authorities, or by the Board of Trade, to prevent anything in the shape of monopoly. Charges which are too high, it should be remembered, operate as an oppressive and unequal tax on commerce, and obstruct that intercourse which they are intended to promote. There can be no more difficulty in fixing a tariff in the case of these omnibus conveyance companies, than there is with regard to the fares chargeable by railway undertakings, to which they are so much akin. Practically, the gas and water companies will be no more inconvenienced in their operations than by the existing pavement; and in future, when a portion of this is torn up, the tram-road will exercise a binding influence on the remainder. Accidents cannot always be prevented, though the danger of their occurrence may be lessened; in this case, powerful breaks will supply the artificial means best calculated to supplement the grand security of a 'careful look-out on both sides.' With reference to the last and most tenable argument against tram-roads, that it is impossible to suppose leading thoroughfares can be handed over to private companies for the purpose of having 'omnibus railways' constructed, it is natural to suppose that the experiment will first be made in the widest approaches, and that it will not be tried among the narrower channels until the merits of the plan have been thoroughly tested. The great danger against which it is requisite to guard, is the possibility that the efforts of interested parties, or the official 'cold shoulder,' may defeat an effort which at least promises to achieve so desirable an end as the acceleration of street-traffic. That the principle of tram-roads is no new-fangled idea, or mere speculative theory, the experience of backwoodsmen would suffice to shew, who, when rolling along the trunks of trees they have felled, invariably construct a rude tram-way for the purpose. Every school-boy knows that it is easier to bowl a cricket-ball along a level than an uneven surface. Tram-ways themselves are no novelty in England; they were laid down as early as 1602 by Mr Beaumont, in the vicinity of Newcastle. Roger North alludes to them in 1676; he says: 'The manner of the carriage is by laying rails of timber from the colliery to the river, exactly straight and parallel; and bulky carts are made with four rollers, fitting these rails, whereby the carriage is so easy, that one horse will draw down four or five chaldrons of coal, and is an immense benefit to the coal-merchants.'

In 1738, an iron tram-way was laid down near Sheffield by John Carr, and excited such an amount of opposition, that, some years afterwards, it was destroyed by the miners. The first railway to which parliamentary sanction was given was in 1801, and the journey from Wandsworth to Croydon was regularly performed in carriages drawn by horses. It is

to this system, which we seem in a great measure to have shot ahead of and forgotten, that it is now proposed to recur, with a view of enabling the thoroughfares of great towns to perform their legitimate functions. McCulloch gives his high authority to the dictum, that 'next to the introduction of money, and weights, and measures, the formation of good roads gives greatest facilities to commerce, and contributes more powerfully perhaps than anything else to the progress of improvement. They have been denominated national veins and arteries; and the latter are not more indispensable to the existence of individuals, than improved communications are to a healthy state of the public economy.'

THE HORROR IN THE HOUSE.

IN TWO PARTS—CONCLUSION.

'It was at this period that attention began to be more generally attracted to the house, and the peculiar evil fortune which seemed to attach to whomsoever became its occupants—the last four families having each lost a member within its walls. A certain suspicion, originating none could say exactly where, hung about the wretched old woman who had clung like an evil destiny to that house of grief. She could obtain no employment; few would bestow upon her the smallest alms; the parish found means to resist her claim; the boys in the street re-christened her, without ceremony, as "Moll Murder;" invited her to supply them with a pen'orth of arsenic on credit; and, in return, pledged themselves faithfully to attend her approaching execution. But apparently these suspicions were insufficient, and the law suffered her to starve on unmolested.

'In good truth, the weight of public opinion inclined to the supernatural side; and such extraordinary tales began to gain credence, that the agent deemed it his duty to apprise the landlord, Mr Archbold, of the character attaching to his house, and the improbability of its getting another tenant, unless something could be speedily done to redeem its reputation.

'Not a week elapsed before Mr Archbold, without commenting on his agent's report, laconically announced that an eligible tenant was on the point of repairing to the spot, and would take immediate possession.

'An excellent idea had occurred to the shrewd old merchant. His favourite nephew, Charles Annseley, had been guilty of an act of which he thought fit highly to disapprove; had, in fact, taken to wife the beautiful daughter of a village schoolmaster! Mr Archbold, who was a man of the fewest words, limited the expression of his indignation to a curt note, in which he informed the delinquent that, to avoid any future misapprehensions, he felt it right to state frankly that he, Charles, would never receive one farthing of the fortune he had destined for him.

'Charles was a young man of high spirit. He looked at his wife, and thought that the united treasures of Great Britain could never have amassed a treasure equal in value to that he had discovered and appropriated to himself in the secluded hamlet of Little Gidding, Hants. Upon the whole, he thought he loved his Mary, if possible, a trifle better for the price he was likely to pay for her. The change in Charles's prospects, if it cooled a few friends, warmed others into more cordial life; and so much sympathy was felt and shewn for the young couple, thus set rudely afloat on the sea of life, with scarce ballast enough to secure their little bark from a daily capsize, that Uncle Archbold became uncomfortably conscious of his ungracious position; and, casting about for some means to redeem himself "into the good thoughts of the world again," bethought him of his vacant house in Gayland Terrace. Money he could not give—a home he might; and here was a splendid opportunity at once to confer an

act of kindness on his nephew, and to rescue his property from the ill name that was daily becoming worse.

He wrote accordingly to Charles, proffering the loan of his furnished mansion in Gayland Terrace, until the couple should have had time to consider their future plans, or, indeed, for any period they chose, provided they took instant possession, and were careful of the costly furniture; and, on Charles's grateful acceptance, signified the result to his agent, as I have mentioned.

'So, early in February, No. 23, now in the full enjoyment of a haunted fame, opened its doors to new tenants; and Charles Annesley, a young man of twenty-five, with good, frank, intelligent features, and resolute bearing—one with whom no ghost of any sense would for a moment dream of contending—escorted his charming little wife across the first threshold of which she was the declared mistress.

'Very much frightened she looked, the little country belle, as the magnificence of her domain opened upon her! As for Charles, he could hardly forbear a hearty laugh, as they passed from room to room, furnished with eastern splendour, his pretty companion setting her little feet apologetically on the yielding carpet, or laying a humble white finger on cabinet, couch, or picture, as if to ascertain that these objects were material, and no fairy vision.

'The young people brought but one servant, a country girl; and their entire resources, inclusive of a little dower of thirty pounds, hoarded for his darling by the thrifty old schoolmaster, amounted to no more than seventy-five pounds. Charles, indeed, who had a taste for, and already some proficiency in medical science, intended to turn this to account; but how the war was to be carried on until the necessary licence was obtained, and patients came to be killed in sufficient numbers to keep the sportsman alive, was an entire enigma.

"How, upon earth, Charles, are we to keep all these lovely things of your kind uncle's clean, with only Hephzibah?" asked Mary. "And, indeed, I shall be half afraid, as it is, to trust them to her determined hands. And, O Charles, there's another thing. I'm so ashamed of myself—I am. I can't—oh! what have I been doing? wasting my time with French and singing, when I can't even co-coo!"

"Coo, my child?" said Charles, laughing, and kissing off a tear—"why should you coo?"

"Co-coo, Charles!" sobbed the poor bride. "If I could have done that—and Hephzibah the housework—I think I'll try."

"You'll do no such thing!" rejoined Charles, seriously alarmed. "You'll make a mess of it, burn your pretty fingers, and poison us both with all sorts of unearthly preparations! No, no! Burlesque is very amusing in its way; but the caricature of a cabinet-pudding—the distorted phantom of a fricandeau—is no fun at all! No—we must manage another servant somehow."

"The agent, when consulted on the matter, looked grave, hemmed, didn't know—whether—in short, he might as well inform Mr Annesley at once, that there existed an unaccountable prejudice against the house, and that it was quite likely Charles might experience difficulties of a kind he did not expect in augmenting his establishment. These auguries were perfectly correct. Not a soul could be found in the vicinity willing to take service at No. 23; and the young couple, reluctant to incur the expense of sending to London for a domestic, sat down to their first meal a little depressed in spirits—Charles, who had concealed from his wife the cause of the difficulty, secretly resolving to extract some further information from the cautious agent on the morrow.

'They were sitting after dinner, with recovered spirits, but in deep consultation, when there came a low knock at the door.

'Bidden to enter, a dirty old woman made her appearance. It was no other than old Charlotte, who had come to offer her valuable services in default of better.

"She loved the house," she said, "and all that was in it. Old as she looked, she could do as much as twenty—was a very good cook, and would work her fingers to the bone for her dear little ladyship. As for wages, she didn't want none of them."

'As these terms seemed reasonably cheap, and they were really in a difficulty, Charles, after a moment's dubious contemplation of the old woman's squalid figure, gave utterance to the assent he saw in his wife's clear eyes, and engaged the strange attendant, enjoining her in the first place to have recourse to soap and water, in the second, to eat a good supper.

'Though the old woman's eyes glistened, like those of a famished wolf, at the mention of food, she paused at the door, and hobbling back, said in a sort of hoarse whisper: "Please, sir, and my lady, don't say that you've taken old Charlotte into your service. I shall never go abroad; and nobody will know, if you don't tell 'em."

'Charles smiled at the idea of the old crone fearing that the dangerous reputation of the house might damage hers; but, unwilling to explain before his wife, hastily gave the required promise, and, summoning Hephzibah, dismissed the new cook, under that young lady's charge, to the sphere of her future duties.

'Affairs for a few days went smoothly enough. Charles commenced a course of study preparatory to the regular carrying out of his professional project, while the little bride busied herself perpetually in the direction of their economical household, and was never tired of watching over the wellbeing of uncle's beautiful things. Old Charlotte, who seemed to possess the faculty of brightening up considerably at will, had shed her squalid slough, and come out a rather venerable, but still effective moth. She really proved to be a very good cook, preparing all their meals without assistance, and often, of her own impulse, providing little supplementary refreshments for the mistress she professed to adore.

'One morning, Annesley having gone out alone, Mary—attended by old Charlotte, who was well acquainted with every drawer, shelf, and cupboard in the place—made a regular progress of inspection throughout the house, ending, as it happened, at the Angel-chamber.

"What a lovely room!" exclaimed Mary, for the twentieth time, as she entered; "and what a couch! When I die, I should like it to be on just such a bed as this"—and she sat down upon it—"with that sweet majestic face shining upon me."

"Everybody *does* die here," said old Charlotte, cheerfully. "Master's mother—Miss May Callender—Colonel Doulton, all breathed their lasts on this very bed."

"Can you remember all those deaths?" asked Mary.

"Remember them? Bless you, my dear, they've all been touched and took within these five years!"

"Touched and took! What do you mean, Charlotte?" said the young mistress, opening her blue eyes.

"Well, well, we'll see!" muttered the old woman. "And so you'd like to die here too, would you, my lamb?" she went on, with a peculiar look, gazing at the pretty, fragile creature before her from head to foot, as though mentally dressing her for the grave.

'Now, whether or not there was something unusually repulsive this day about the old woman, or whether she simply desired to be alone, Mary yielded to an irresistible inclination to dismiss her follower, and, having done so, sat down at the great plate-glass window, which faced the west.

'The view from hence was both fair and sad. First

came a slip of much-neglected garden, a crowded battle-ground of weeds and flowers—the weeds having decidedly the best of it—some leafless elms and fig-trees, and a high wall, magnified to an immense size with sheaves and coils of everlasting ivy. Past this was a Roman Catholic cemetery, long since filled, and abandoned as a place of interment. Over and between three or four noble cypresses, that shaded the forgotten dead, might be seen the broad weald, green with sprouting corn; then a range of blue hills, on the last of which lingered the westering sun.

'Half an hour later, Charles was returning home. When within a few paces of his own door, a loud ringing shriek struck him like a stab! In a moment, he was in the house, and dashed into the room from the direction of which he had fancied the cry proceeded.

'His wife was on the bed, frightfully convulsed—Hephzibah and Charlotte beside her. She recovered instantly on seeing him, and a violent flood of tears completely restored her tranquillity; after which, being left alone with her husband, Mary related as follows:

'She had sat for some time at the window, watching the purpling clouds, and the sombre tints of evening calmly enveloping the quiet scene, when, becoming sensible of a degree of lassitude, and a strange inert feeling not usual with her, she moved to the low golden couch, and lying fairly down, fell into an uneasy sleep.

'She lay upon her right side, with her face to the wall—on that side, distant scarcely half a yard from the bed—and dreamed that, so lying, the wall before her opened slowly, and that there issued from it a skeleton, bearing in its hands its own severed skull. As it approached, one fleshless hand detached itself from the skull, and pointed to the vacant eye-holes, while the head muttered: "See how they treat us yonder. Here were blue diamonds once, my sister, that laughed and swam like yours. Come, let us compare!"

'The skull was thrust up into her very face. She was conscious of the earthy, fetid odour—her own face was drawn as it were more and more into the sister-skull, as though it were becoming part of it—when, with a shriek and a desperate struggle, she flung the spectre and the dream away.

'Although, for the moment, the painful impression appeared to pass away, it was but too evident to Annesley that the health and spirits of his little wife had received a serious shock. In a few days, her rich colour was gone, her lips looked dry and feverish—she began to complain of headache, and started, when suddenly touched, or at the least unexpected sound.

'One day, after making vain efforts to eat her breakfast, the poor little thing leaned her head on her hands, and burst into tears. "O Charles, my poor boy," she sobbed, "I fear I'm very, very ill."

'The wistful, anxious look in those blue eyes alarmed her husband far more than even her words. He laid her tenderly on the sofa, soothing her to the utmost of his power, and, not without bitter self-reproach for neglecting it so long, despatched Hephzibah to request Mr Mawry's immediate attendance.

'The little doctor acknowledged that his new patient looked delicate in the extreme, and required every attention. The present attack was clearly nervous; and he endeavoured to elicit from her whether she had sustained any recent shock or alarm. Mary, however, was ashamed to confess her dream; and Mr Mawry could discover nothing but that she was subject to a sudden and fearful spasm, which affected her whole head from the eyes to the throat. In the latter organ, especially, she suffered much pain.

'On the point of leaving, Mawry turned round, and carelessly observed: "I take it for granted, my

dear madam, that you have an excellent watcher in your husband; but you need some care. Who, may I ask, is your principal attendant?"—Mary smiled.

"Who, for example, makes your tea?"

"The housemaid, Hephzibah, generally; but sometimes old Ch"—Mary checked herself.

"I beg your pardon—who?"

"I was about to name an old woman we have taken into the house to help the housemaid, but, for some reason I have not inquired, she does not wish it to be known."

"Old Charlotte!" ejaculated Mawry.

"Such is her name," replied Mary, astonished at his astonishment.

"Mawry, who had sat down again, got up with a face white as ashes.

"I—I have a word to say to Mr Annesley," he said, and took a hasty leave.

'Charles was reading medicine in the Angel-room.

"Good Heavens, sir!" exclaimed the little doctor, bursting in, "do you know what you have got in your house?"

'Horrid visions of his Mary in typhus fever—in small-pox—a lunatic—flashed like lightning across Charles's mind.

"What—what?" he gasped out.

"Moll Murder!"

"Moll what?"

"The old hag to whom the boys in the town have given that title, for her strange association with every death that has occurred in this unhappy house since it became your uncle's. The very worst suspicions cleave to her. For mercy's sake, Mr Annesley, get rid of this old wretch before you are an hour older!"

'Charles stood aghast. "Is it—possible that?"—

"I know not what is possible; but do it, sir—do it," said the eager apothecary; and Charles, infected with his earnestness, promised compliance.

'That night Charlotte was dismissed, this time taking her pattens with her, as though her work were done.

"Touched and took!" was Charlotte's benediction, looking back and shaking her finger as she passed the door.

'Let me pass quickly over these sad details. The young wife was indeed doomed. Drooping gradually, like the preceding victims, she slowly but certainly followed them to the same bourne.

'Annesley would have left the house, but nothing could induce Mary to consent. His uncle would be vexed; would think them careless, ungrateful—besides, they had no other home. Most of all, she earnestly desired, if die she must, to breathe her last in the Angel-chamber, with those glorious eyes and protecting arms above her.

'She had her wish; and, in a few short weeks, the fourth victim to the mystery of that house slept in the village churchyard.

'The popular feeling against old Charlotte had by this time attained such open expression, that it became absolutely necessary to investigate its grounds. She was accordingly given into custody. Some examinations took place; but the doctor being compelled to certify to a case of natural death, and no direct inculpatory evidence being adduced, the prisoner, on the very day of poor Mary's funeral, was restored to liberty, and immediately disappeared.

'It was now imagined that the house would be finally closed. The next-door neighbour on one side had already quitted; he on the other had given notice. Mr Archbold himself felt his mind infected by the prevailing superstition; and, moreover, seeing the cause of misunderstanding removed, was ready enough to give indulgence to his returning kindness towards his nephew, to whom he accordingly wrote, desiring him to quit without delay the scene of his

bereavement, and resume the place he had formerly held in his uncle's home and affection.

'Charles refused.

'He considered that his uncle, in placing them in a house under this notorious ban, had been actuated by less disinterested motives than he had imagined, and had been even in some degree instrumental in the fatal misfortune that had befallen him. Besides, he had a duty to perform, to which it was his fixed determination to devote every energy he possessed—nay, if needful, life itself. He would find out the mystery of the haunted house. And no knight, in quest of the holy grail, ever started on the doubtful way with more resolved purpose than Charles, when, returning from his Mary's funeral, he re-entered the desolate mansion.

'He was alone, absolutely alone; for poor Hephzibah, though attached to her master, and pitying him with all her honest heart, had evinced such unmistakable symptoms of aversion to sleeping another night in the house, that Charles, unshaken in purpose, judged it best to dismiss her at once to her friends. So the door closed behind the sobbing Hephzibah, and Charles was alone—absolutely alone.

'For hours he sat musing by the melancholy fire, undisturbed by a single sound. Evening at length approached, and still he sat, as though Memory had chained him hand and foot to the place where he had passed so many happy hours. Gradually, he got into a train of recollection that conducted him through the entire history of his lost love, from the first chance meeting when he had stopped, a lost, benighted hunter, to inquire the road, and Mary's azure eyes glittered in the starlight, as if they belonged to it, while she stepped forward to his horse's side, and raised them in directing him. He had arrived at the evening when they had come, with their modest baggage and rustic henchwoman, to the magnificent house, had examined its alarming glories, had dined merrily, and were reclining in their deep velvet chairs, their laughing faces reflected grotesquely in the polished stove, up to the moment when old Charlotte, like an evil genius, appeared at the door.

'At that moment a sound struck Charles's ear—it was like a distant footstep somewhere within the house. The door of the room in which he sat was wide open, and presently he was aware of a slow soft step ascending the stair.

'To say that Charles's heart did not accelerate its usual pace by a pulse or two, would be to deny a feeling that might have so far assailed the most collected. An idea that the bold resolution he had formed was about to be met half-way, that the mysterious Horror of the House was actually approaching him in an incarnate shape, struck the listener with an appalling sense of being suddenly called upon to deal with what one cannot comprehend. Charles involuntarily gripped the velvet arms of his chair, and half rising, slowly turned his face to the door, where the step had halted.

'There stood old Charlotte!

'His fear melted into rage.

'Wretched old hag!—accursed murderess!" he exclaimed, forgetting for the moment his own doubts of her guilt—"dare you!"

'Charles Annesley," said the old woman, walking up to him, "it is you who should not dare. I warned you—I warned your mother—I warned Mrs Callender—I warned every one of you, young and old, of the danger hidden in this fearful house. Yet I loved and served them all when they would let me, and to do so ran the same risk with them. For reward, you have put the murderer's mark on me. I am the devil's mate, Moll Murder, the old poisoning witch. My life is nothing; they might as well have hanged me. I hoped they would, for the Lord keeps justice for the innocent, and He knows that I never willingly harmed a living creature. They were all touched and

took, poor dears! but not by me. I know you are come back to find out who killed your darling, and old Charlotte's come to help you."

"You!"

"Like enough in some things," said the old woman steadily. "You've no more pleasure in life—no more have I. You've one object—mine's the same, only my reason's the best. Find out what you may, you can't bring back the dead. But I wear Cain's black brand, and that's an ugly mask to die in; I won't, if I can help it."

'Charles stood looking at her with an amazement he did not care to hide; something in the woman's altered manner impressed him favourably, despite himself. His thoughts held a rapid council: if the hag were guilty, and were really a prey to that fearful form of mania which could alone account for such cruel crimes, he had no fear for himself, and might even, by examination and analysis, obtain some clue to her alleged practices. If she were innocent, she might afford him important aid in his investigations. Some attendant he absolutely required. In fine, he acceded to her proposal, and directed her to take up her residence in the house as before.

'A feeling he could not well define determined Charles to sleep that night in the Angel-chamber. It was there that his Mary had experienced the first mysterious visitation—there, on his bosom, breathed her last gentle sigh.

'As he lay down, though with little hope of rest, he could not resist uttering a fervent prayer that the terrible influence might reveal itself to him; also—no matter with what peril accompanied—so that he might but analyse its fearful features, and gauge its destroying power.

'His desire was fulfilled. It must have been about two o'clock when Charles woke, with a start, under the impression that a hand had been laid upon his face. But such a hand! It could have belonged to no living human thing. Horrible as it seems, it was like that of a putrid corpse. His mouth, his nose, his eyes, his throat, were choked and smarting with some fearful effluvia, his pulse went irregularly—his very soul sickened within him!

'Annesley was a man of cool, intrepid nature, and the strongest nerves. Despite his confusion, he rose and wrestled with the Terror, as if it were a living foe that had nearly mastered him—a moment, and the victory was won. Slowly and reluctantly, as though baffled in its assault, the horrible fear, whose presence he had almost felt, relaxed its hold, and quitted him. Charles instinctively staggered forward, as in pursuit, reached the window, and, throwing it up, gazed forth into the calm, cold night.

"Whence, whence, O Horror?" he gasped.

'The next moment, with a countenance deadly white, he reclosed the window, and returned to his bed.

'In that instant, the Horror, the Ghost, had revealed itself to him, as he had desired.

'But Charles would have further proof, and witness too.

'The following morning, after pretending to eat some portion of the breakfast he found comfortably prepared for him in the library, Charles summoned old Charlotte to a conference.

'She came, so changed, that her master could scarcely recognise, in the hale, respectable-looking matron before him, the wretched old outcast of the previous day. But I have said that Charlotte had, in common with other humble creatures I have met with, a way of brightening and expanding under certain influences, which revealed qualities hitherto wrapt in shade. The troubles she had undergone, above all, the foul stigma under which she laboured, had had a purifying and vivifying effect, so apparent in her manner and language, that Charles secretly congratulated himself on his ally.

'He began by tracing as minutely as possible the history of the later illnesses and deaths, beginning with that of his mother, which event occurred during his absence abroad. In this he received most material assistance from Mr Mawry, for whom he sent during the morning, and who, after overcoming his astonishment at finding old Charlotte a member of the council, entered with all zeal into the inquiry.

'The result proved that the same extraordinary symptoms had been evolved in every case—namely, severe nervous, semi-cataleptic attacks, prostration of strength, mental depression, decay of the vital powers, and death—Mawry declaring himself utterly unable to account either for the origin of the disease, or for the rapidity and certainty with which, once conceived, it hurried the victims to their end.

'On receiving the information he had gathered, Annesley was struck with one singular feature in the case—the predilection evinced by every patient in turn for the Angel-chamber. It seemed a fatal fancy; for, certainly, whatever soothing influence it might exercise on the minds of the invalids, was not reflected in their bodies. On the contrary, every one became rapidly worse, and the mysterious Terror—though its recurrence grew more and more frequent—seemed gradually to lose its intensity, in proportion as physical health declined, till it left the last days of the sufferer wholly undisturbed.

'Now," said Charles, as with a deep sigh he raised his pale face from his hands, after a minute's meditation, "come with me, and I will shew you the Horror in the House."

'He walked, followed by the others, straight to the Angel-room. There it shone, with its regal couch, its superb mirrors, its glowing cabinets, its purple curtains. Charles threw up the window, admitting the soft fresh breeze.

"Does this," he asked, "look like a pestilence palace—a house of pain and death?"

'He struck upon one of the gilded panels as he spoke; it returned a hollow sound, like an echo of the last word, "death!"

'The next moment, Charles caught up a poker from the fireplace, and dashed in the panel.

"Stoop down," he said to Mawry.

'The latter did so, but started back in horror, as a sickening, loathsome odour pervaded the apartment, as from a newly opened grave.

'There lay indeed the secret of the Horror. Out of that panel crept the unseen destroyer that had sucked away the breath, the life of no less than five victims.

'From the Angel-chamber, which had been originally intended as a luxurious bath-room, a pipe had been prepared, the other extremity of which had vent in the sloping bank of the adjacent cemetery, long since become one mass of corrupting human clay. Thus, this fatal conduit, itself decayed, winding among broken vaults and mouldering mausoleums, gathered up the noxious exhalations, and poured them into the golden room. By what atmospheric changes, or movements in the earth, the amount of miasma thus transmitted was governed and modified, cannot of course be known; but that the poison varied greatly in quantity and strength, was sufficiently proved by the fact, that attention was never attracted to the vitiated atmosphere of the spacious and seemingly well-ventilated room.

'The panel which concealed the mouth of the pipe was low down—exactly on a level with the head of one sleeping in the Angel-bed, and probably distant from it but three or four feet. An almost imperceptible crevice in the thin panel must have projected that baneful breath into the sleeper's face as certainly, and, as it proved, as fatally, as the "juice of cursed hebenon" dropped from the phial of the Danish regicide. No marvel that the end was rapid! To turn the face to that wall, was indeed to bid adieu to life, its hopes, its troubles, and its cares.

'Those more remarkable symptoms I have had to relate, can only be referrible to nervous temperament, or to the mysterious trouble acting almost in the nature of disease, until disease was positively engendered.

'When, on the previous night, Charles threw up the window, some slight odour eliminated from the burial-ground, connecting itself with the loathsome sense from which he had just escaped, at once revealed to him the latter's origin.

'I gave you to understand, children, that this story was true; I now repeat that it is based on actual and melancholy fact.

'Many a child's banquet have I shared in that fatal chamber with my pretty May.'

MICHAELMAS AND ITS BIRD.

SAINT MICHAEL is the Mars of the Christian calendar. His name never occurs in the Scriptures save in connection with strife and warfare. The prophet Daniel records how Michael subdued the Persian prince who had for one-and-twenty days successfully withstood a less mighty angel; and he concludes his prophecies with foretelling how 'the same great prince which standeth for the children' of Israel, shall in time to come deliver them out of the hands of their enemies. St Jude alludes to the conflict between Satan and the archangel over the body of Moses. The seer of Patmos tells how 'there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not.'

Headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of heaven; eternal wrath
Burnt after them unto the bottomless pit.

Tradition says Michael bore the banner of the celestial host, and led them against the rebellious angels, till he chased Lucifer and his adherents from heaven, and enclosed them in dark air till the day of judgment; not in the upper regions, or upon earth, but, like Mohammed's coffin, between the two; so that when they look upwards, they may see the joys they have lost, and when they cast their looks downwards, behold mortals ascending to that heaven from which they fell, and to which they can never hope to return. At one time, there was preserved in a castle in Normandy a red velvet buckler, declared to be the identical shield borne by the mighty archangel in that fearful fight. In guerdon of his success, Michael is said to have succeeded revolted Lucifer as chief of the celestial armies. The apocryphal 'Book of Enoch' calls him 'one of the holy angels, who, presiding over human virtues, commands the nations'—Raphael superintending the spirits of men, and Gabriel guarding Paradise and the cherubims.

In ancient heraldic books, Michael is described as the head of the order of archangels, and represented armed with a dart, and carrying a banner hanging from a cross. He has given his name to no less than four orders of knighthood. The order of the Wing of St Michael was instituted in 1172 by Alfonso of Portugal, to commemorate a signal victory obtained by him over Albarac of Seville, in consequence, as he believed, of his having invoked the aid of the archangel before the battle. Louis XI. of France founded, in 1469, the order of St Michael, which was afterwards revived and remodelled by the *Grand Monarque*. Both these orders are now extinct; but there still exists a Bavarian order, instituted in 1693, and our own Maltese order of St Michael and St George, founded so lately as 1818, and ranking after the older order of the Bath.

The festival in honour of St Michael was kept in Apulia as early as 493, and has ever since been celebrated with great solemnity. By the ecclesiastical law enacted in 1014 by the Saxon king, Ethelred, every adult Christian was obliged, for three days prior

to the festival of St Michael, to fast on bread and water and raw herbs, and to go to church and confession barefoot. The priests and their flocks went in procession barefoot during the same period. Every well-to-do person was to have his commons for the three days prepared (without flesh), as if for his own eating, and then give them to the poor. Every servant was to be excused from labour for three days, or allowed to do only what he chose, that he might better perform his fast on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before the feast. For breaking the fast, a servant was to 'make satisfaction with his hide,' or, in other words, be well flogged; a poor free-man, pay a fine of thirty pence; and a king's thane, a fine of one hundred and thirty shillings—the money so collected being divided among the poor.

Michaelmas boasted but few customs peculiar to itself. In the west of England, maidens used to go up and down the hedges gathering crab-apples; when enough were got, they were taken home, and arranged on the floor of a loft, so as to form the initials of the names of the damsels' various suitors. The initials which were found most perfect on Michaelmas Day, were supposed to be those of the most eligible swains, the strength of whose passions was symbolised by the completeness of the tell-tale initials. In Hertfordshire, the young men used to assemble in the fields on Michaelmas Day, and choose a leader, whom they were compelled to follow through ponds and ditches—

Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale.

Every person they met in their wild career was stopped, taken up by the arms, and bumped on the ground, or swung against another captive. On these 'ganging days,' as they were called, each publican they chose to visit was expected to produce a plum-cake and a gallon of ale for the refreshment of his unprofitable guests.

Englishmen, however careless of keeping up old customs in general, cling with tenacity to any in which eating and drinking are concerned. Lent salt fish has outlived fasting; people who despise confectionary, like a hot-cross bun on Good-Friday; and roast-beef, plum-pudding, and mince-pies will, we may be sure, survive as Christmas dishes, even if the mialtee and holly follow the yule-log and Christmas nummers into oblivion. And so will Michaelmas be ever associated with goose, although how they came to be indissolubly united is a mystery it passes our skill to fathom. Tradition of course has its way of accounting for this as for everything else; and it is a popular belief that glorious Queen Bess, one 29th of September, was busy discussing a roasted goose with appetite and enjoyment, when a messenger arrived with the welcome news of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, upon which her majesty, laying down her knife and fork, said: 'From this time forth let all English subjects eat goose on this day.' Unfortunately for the credibility of this story, the Spanish fleet met its fate in July; and although the intelligence did not travel with the speed of electricity, it yet reached the court soon enough for public thanksgivings to be offered in London on the 20th of August. This custom seems to have been transferred from Martinmas to Michaelmas, goose being a standing dish on the continent at the former season, in honour of St Martin, who, having modestly hidden himself when elected to a bishopric, was discovered by a goose.

Norfolk has long been celebrated for its geese; but most of the Norfolk geese sold in the metropolitan markets are not natives, but raised in Prussia and the Rhenish provinces, and fattened in Norfolk for the London consumers. Still the goose is looked upon as the county bird, and at the Old Man's Hospital in Norwich—which has existed since 1249—Michaelmas Day is kept as the grand gala-day of the year. Before

the glowing fire, a ton of coals strong, slowly revolves a skeleton cylinder of seven or eight bars, on each of which are spitted seven geese; nor finer nor fatter e'er smoked on a dish, or reclined on a platter. A little turnspit assists in the operations; but he is obliged to be relieved every now and then, lest he should share the fate of the noble birds he watches so sedulously.

In England, apple-sauce is the common condiment served with goose; in Ireland, they rejoice in kail-common—a melange of potatoes, parsnips, cabbages, and onions, mashed up together with butter; in Wales, we have eaten goose with pease-pudding, but cannot conscientiously recommend the conjunction. But however served up, so long as it is properly cooked, the goose may hold its own, for flavour and richness, with any bird that gourmards delight to honour.

Can roasted Philomel a liver
Fit for a pie produce?
Fat pies that on the Rhine's sweet river
Fair Strasburg bakes—pray, who's the giver?
A goose!

At Michaelmas-time, says a Suffolk rhyme—

At Michaelmas-time, or a little before,
Half an apple goes to the core;
At Christmas-time, or a little after,
A crab in the hedge, and thanks to the grafter.

In the north of Ireland, they have a saying that, 'On Michaelmas Day, the devil puts his foot on the blackberries,' from which we may learn that after that date blackberries are not worth the plucking. It is to be hoped there is not equal truth in another piece of proverbial wisdom, 'So many days the moon is old on Michaelmas Day, so many floods after.' If so, as the moon will be fourteen days old on this present day of St Michael, the rain of 1860—considering what is past—will be memorable indeed.

THE WILD HUNTRESS.

CHAPTER XLIX.—AN UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE.

THE finding of the flowers, or rather the reflections to which they gave rise, rendered me more anxious than ever to come up with the caravan. The little incident had made me aware of a new danger hitherto unthought of. Up to that hour, my chief anxiety with regard to Lilian Holt had been the companionship of the Mormon. This had been heightened by some information incidentally imparted by the deserters—chiefly by Sure-shot. It related to the destination of a number of the emigrants, who accompanied the caravan; and with whom the rifleman had held intercourse, previous to their departure from Van Buren. These were not prospective gold-diggers, but persons migrating westward from motives more spiritual: they were *Saints* bound for the Salt Lake—there intending to stay and settle. There was a large party of these 'Latter-day' converts under the conduct of an apostolic agent. This much had Sure-shot ascertained. He had not seen their leader, nor heard his name. Josh Stebbins might be the very man?

Even as a conjecture, this was bitter enough. Up to the time of joining with the deserters, I had consoled myself with the belief, that California was the destination of this saint and his squatter protégé; though at times I was troubled with the remembrance of Su-wa-nee's words. Their truth was almost confirmed by the report of the ex-rifleman. I could not now think otherwise, than that Stebbins was bound for the Mormon City; and that he was the fox in charge of the flock of geese that accompanied the caravan.

It was more than probable. While waiting in Swampville for the letter of Lilian, I had learned something of the history of the *ci-devant* schoolmaster

—not much of the period subsequent to his departure from that place—little more than the fact that he had joined the Mormons, and had risen to high office in their church—in short, that he was one of their 'apostles.' This fact, however, was one of primary significance.

Had the squatter also submitted to the hideous delusion? Was he also on his way to the shrine of the faith? The answer to the former question was of slight importance, so long as that to the latter might be conceived in the affirmative. If Holt was bound to the Salt Lake, then was the fate of his daughter to be dreaded. Not long there may a virgin dwell. The baptism of the New Jordan soon initiates its female neophytes into the mysteries of womanhood—absolutely compelling them to the marriage-tie—forcing them to a wedlock loveless and unholy.

Suffering under such apprehensions, I scarcely needed the additional stimulus of jealousy to urge me onward; and yet, strange as it may appear, the finding of the bouquet had produced this effect.

I would have ridden on, without halt, but our animals required rest. We had been travelling nearly all night, and throughout the morning—under the friendly shelter of the cotton-wood forest. We needed an hour or two of repose; and, seeking a secure place near the ground of the deserted camp, we stopped to obtain it.

The train could not be far ahead of us? While seated in silence around the fire we had kindled, we could hear at intervals the reports of guns. They came from up the valley, and from a good distance. The sounds reached us but faintly—now single shots, and then two or three together, or following in quick succession.

We were at no loss to account for the reports. They were caused by the hunters of the caravan, in pursuit of game. We had now entered that charming region where elk and antelope abounded. On our morning-march, we had seen herds of both trooping over the sward—almost within range of our rifles. Even as we sat, a band of beautiful antelopes appeared in the open ground near our bivouack fire; and, after satisfying their curiosity by gazing at us for a moment, they trotted off into the covert.

It was a tempting sight—too tempting for the young backwoods hunter to resist. Seizing his rifle, he took after them—promising us as he went off a more savoury breakfast than the dry buffalo-meat we were broiling.

Soon after, we heard the crack of his rifle; and, presently, he re-appeared with a dead 'prong-horn' upon his shoulders.

As Wingrove came up to the fire, I noticed a singular expression upon his countenance. Instead of being rejoiced at his success, his looks betrayed anxiety.

I questioned him as to the cause. Instead of answering directly, he drew me to one side; and inquired in a whisper, if I had seen any one in his absence.

'No. Why do you ask?'

'If it wasn't altogether impossible, I'd swar I seed that girl.'

'What girl?'

I trembled, as I put the question: I was thinking of Lillian.

'That darnationed devil of a Chicasaw.'

'What! Su-wa-nee?'

'Yes—Su-wa-nee.'

'Oh—that cannot be? It could not be her?'

'So I'd a thort myself; but darn me, capt'n! if I kin b'lieve it wasn't her. What I seed was as like her as two squ'alls.'

'What did you see?'

'Why, jest arter I'd killed the goat, an' war heisting it on my shoulders, I spied a Indyen glidin' into the bushes. I seed it war a squaw; an' jest the

pictur o' the Chicasaw. She 'peared as ef she hed kim right from hyar, an' I thort you mout a seed her.'

'Did you get sight of her face?'

'No, her back war torst me, an' she kep on 'ithout turnin' or stoppin' a minnit. 'Twar the very duds that girl used to wear, an' her bulk to an inch. It kuden't a been liker her. Darn me, ef 'twan't eyther her or her ghost.'

'It is very improbable that it could have been either?'

I did not for a moment entertain the idea that it was the Chicasaw he had seen; and yet my comrade was fully impressed with the belief, and reiterated the assertion that he had either seen Su-wa-nee or her 'shadder.'

Though the thing was improbable, it was not beyond possibility. We knew that there were Indians travelling with the train: we had heard so before starting out. But what likelihood was there of Su-wa-nee being among them? Certainly not much.

That there were prairie Indians around us, was probable enough; in fact, more than probable: it was certain. We had already observed their traces upon the ground of the deserted camp. The 'squaw' seen by Wingrove might be one of these.

Whether or not, her presence proved the proximity of red-skins; and the knowledge of having such dangerous neighbours, summoned us to a fresh exercise of vigilance and caution. Our fire was instantly extinguished; and, contenting ourselves with a morsel of the half-broiled buffalo-beef, we moved to some distance from the spot, before proceeding to cook the antelope.

A dark covert in the thick woods offered us a more secure kitchen. There we rekindled our fire—and roasting the ribs of the prong-horn, refreshed ourselves with an ample meal.

After an hour's repose, we resumed our journey—in confident expectation, that before sunset we should get within sight of the caravan.

CHAPTER L

UP THE CANYON.

We had not ridden far from our halting-place, when we arrived at the end of the great cotton-wood forest. Beyond that, the trace led over open ground—here and there dotted by groves and 'islands' of timber.

Through these we threaded our way—keeping as much as possible among the trees.

Further on, we came upon a gorge—one of the noted *cañons* through which the Huerfano runs. Here the river sweeps down a narrow channel, with rocky banks that rise on each side into precipitous cliffs of stupendous height.

To avoid this gorge—impassable for wheeled vehicles—the wagon-trace, below its entrance, turns off to the right; and we perceived that the caravan had taken that direction. To get round the heads of the transverse ravines, that run into the *cañon*, a detour must be made of not less than ten miles in length. Beyond the *cañon*—the trace once more returns to the stream.

The notes of a military reconnoissance had forewarned me of this deviation; and, further, that the trace passed over a ridge altogether destitute of timber. To follow it, therefore, in the broad light of day, would expose our little party to view. If hostile Indians should be hanging after the caravan, they would be sure to see us, and equally certain to make an attack upon us; and from the traces we had noticed at the night-camp—to say nothing of what Wingrove had seen—we knew there were Indians in the valley. They might not be hostile; but the chances were ten to one that they were; and, under this supposition, it would be imprudent in us to risk crossing the ridge before nightfall.

There were two alternatives—to remain under the timber till after sunset, and then proceed by night; or to push on into the cañon, and endeavour to make our way along the bed of the stream. So far as we knew, the path was an untried one; but it might be practicable for horses.

We were now on the most dangerous ground we had yet trodden—the highway of several hostile tribes, and their favourite *tening*-ground, when going to or returning from their forays against the half-civilised settlements of New Mexico. The proximity of the caravan—which we calculated to be about ten miles ahead of us—only increased our risk. There was but little danger of the Indians attacking that: the train was too strong, even without the escort. But the probability was, that a band of Indian horse-thieves would be skulking on its skirts—not to make an attack upon the caravan itself—but as wolves after a gang of buffalo, to sacrifice the stragglers. Unless when irritated by some hostile demonstration, these robbers confine themselves to plundering, but in the case of some, murder is the usual concomitant of plunder.

The delay of another night was disheartening to all of us—but especially so to myself, for reasons already known. If we should succeed in passing through the cañon, perhaps on the other side we might come in sight of the caravan? Cheered on by this hope, we hesitated no longer; but, hastening forward, entered between the jaws of the defile.

A fearful chasm it was—the rocky walls rising perpendicularly to the height of many hundreds of feet—presenting a grim *façade* on each side of us. The sky above appeared a mere strip of blue; and we were surrounded by a gloom deeper than that of twilight. The torrent roared and foamed at our feet; and the trail at times traversed through the water.

There was a trail, as we soon perceived; and, what was more significant, one that had recently been travelled! Horses had been over it; and in several places the rocky pebbles, that should otherwise have been dry, were wet by the water that had dripped from their fetlocks. A large troop of horses must have passed just before us!

Had the dragoon escort gone that way? More likely, a party of mounted travellers belonging to the train? And yet this did not strike us as being likely.

We were soon convinced that such was not the case. On riding forward, we came upon a mud-deposit, at the mouth of one of the transverse ravines, over which led the trail. The mud exhibited the *tracks* distinctly and in a more significant light—they were *hoof-tracks*! We saw that more than a hundred horses had passed up the defile; and not one *shod* animal among them!

This fact was very significant. They could not have been troop-horses; nor yet those of white men? If ridden, they must have been ridden by Indians?

It did not follow that they were ridden. We were travelling through the region of the *mustang*. Doves had been seen upon our route, at great distances off—for these are the shiest and wildest of wild animals. A *caballada* may have passed through the gorge, on their way to the upper valley. There was nothing improbable in that. Although the plains are the favourite habitat of the horse, the *mustang* of Spanish America is half a mountain animal, and often penetrates the most difficult passes—climbing the declivities with hoof as sure as that of a chamois.

Had these horses been ridden? That was the point to be determined, and how?

The sign was not very intelligible, but sufficiently so for our purpose. The little belt of mud-deposit was only disturbed by a single line of tracks—crossing it directly from side to side. The animals had traversed it in single file. Wild horses would have

crowded over it—some of them at least kicking out to one side or the other. This I myself knew.

The reasoning appeared conclusive. We had no longer a doubt that a large party of Indians had gone up the gorge before us, and not very long before us.

It now became a question of advance or retreat. To halt within the defile—even had a halting-place offered—would have been perilous above all things. There was no spot, where we could conceal either ourselves or our animals. The mounted Indians might be returning down again; and, finding us in such a snug trap, would have us at their mercy? We did not think, therefore, of staying where we were.

To go back, was too discouraging. We were already half through the cañon, and had ridden over a most difficult path—often fording the stream at great risk, and climbing over boulders of rock, that imperilled the necks, both of ourselves and our animals.

We determined to keep on.

We were in hopes that the Indians had by this time passed clear through the gorge, and ridden out into the valley above. In that case, there would be no great risk in our proceeding to the upper end.

Our expectations did not deceive us. We reached the mouth of the chasm—without having seen other signs of those who had preceded us, than the trail of their horses.

We had heard sounds, however, that had given us some apprehension—the reports of guns—not as during the early part of the day, in single shots, but in half-dozens at a time, and once or twice in larger volleys, as if of a scattering *fusillade*!

The sounds came from the direction of the upper valley; and were but faintly heard—so faintly that we were in doubt, as to whether they were the reports of firearms. The grumbling and rushing of the river hindered us from hearing them more distinctly.

But for the presence of Indians in the valley—about which we were quite certain—we should perhaps not have noticed the sounds, or else have taken them for something else. Perhaps we might have conjectured, that a gang of buffaloes had passed near the train—leading to a brisk firing of rifles; but the presence of the Indians rendered this hypothesis less probable.

We still continued to observe caution. Before emerging from the defile, we halted near its entrance—Wingrove and myself stealing forward to reconnoitre.

An elevated post—which we obtained upon a shelf of the rock—gave us a commanding prospect of the upper valley. The sight restored our confidence: *the caravan was in view!*

CHAPTER LL.

THE ORPHAN BUTTE.

The landscape over which we were looking was one that has long been celebrated, in the legends of trapper and *cibolero*; and certainly no lovelier is to be met with in the midland regions of America. Though new to my eyes, I recognised it from the descriptions I had read and heard of it. There was an idiosyncrasy in its features—especially in that lone mound rising conspicuously in its midst—which at once proclaimed it the valley of the Huerfano. There stood the 'Orphan Butte.' There was no mistaking its identity.

This valley, or, more properly, *valle*—a word of very different signification—is in reality a level plain, flanked on each side by a continuous line of bluffs or 'benches'—themselves forming the abutments of a still higher plain, which constitutes the general level of the country. The width between the bluffs is five or six miles; but, at the distance of some ten miles from our point of view, the cliffs converge—apparently closing in the valley in that direction. This, however, is only apparent. Above the butte is another deep cañon, through which the river has cleft its way.

The intervening space is a picture fair to behold. The surface, level as a billiard-table, is covered with *gramma* grass, of a bright, almost emerald verdure. The uniformity of this colour is relieved by cotton-wood copses, whose foliage is but one shade darker. Commingling with these, and again slightly darkening the hue of their frondage, are other trees, with a variety of shrubs or climbing-plants—as clematis, wild roses, and willows. Here and there, a noble poplar stands apart—as if disdainful to associate with the more lowly growth of the groves.

These 'topes' are of varied forms: some rounded, some oval, and others of more irregular shape—many of them appearing as if planted by the hands of the landscape-gardener; while the Huerfano, winding through their midst, could not have been more gracefully guided had it been specially designed for an 'ornamental water.'

The butte itself, rising in the centre of the plain, and towering nearly two hundred feet above the general level, has all the semblance of an artificial work—not of human hands, but a cairn constructed by giants. Just such does it appear—a vast pyramidal cone, composed of huge prismatic blocks of granite, black almost as coal—the colour occasioned by an iron admixture in the rock.

For two-thirds of its slope, a thick growth of cedar covers it with a skirting of darkest green. Above this appear the huge naked prisms—piled one upon the other, in a sort of irregular crystallisation, and ending in a summit slightly truncated.

Detached boulders lie around its base, that, having yielded to the disintegrating influences of rain and wind, and lost their balance, have rolled down the declivity of its sides.

No other similar elevation is near—the distant bluffs alone equalling it in height. But there the resemblance ends; for the latter are a formation of stratified sandstone, while the rocks composing the butte are purely granitic! Even in a geological point of view, is the Orphan Butte isolated from all the world. In a double sense, does it merit its distinctive title.

Singular is the picture formed by this lone mound, and the park-like scene that surrounds it—a picture rare as fair. Its very frame is peculiar. The bench of light reddish sandstone sharply outlined on each edge—the bright green of the sward along its base—and the dark belt of cedars cresting its summit, form, as it were, a double moulding to the frame. Over this can be distinguished the darker outlines of the great Cordilleras; above them, again, the snowy cones of the Wa-to-yah; and grandly towering over all, the sky-piercing summit of Pike's Peak.

All these forms gleaming in the full light of a noon-day sun, with a heaven above them of deep ethereal blue, present a picture that for grandeur and sublimity is not surpassed upon the Earth.

A long while could we have gazed upon it; but an object that came at once under our eyes turned our thoughts into a far different channel.

Away up the valley, at its furthest end, appeared a small white spot—little bigger to our view than the disc of an archer's target. It was of an irregular roundish form; and on both sides of it were other shapes—smaller and of darker hue.

We had no difficulty in making out what these appearances were: the white object was the tilt of a wagon; the dark forms around it were those of men—mounted and afoot.

It must have been the last wagon of the train, since no other could be seen; and as it appeared at the very end of the valley—in the angle formed by the convergence of the cliffs—we concluded that another cañon opened there into which the rest had entered. Whether the wagon was moving onward, we did not stay to determine; the caravan was in sight, and this, acting upon us like an electric influence, impelled us to hasten forward.

Calling to our companions to advance, and having remounted, we rode out of the gorge, and kept on up the valley.

We no longer observed the slightest caution. The caravan was before our eyes; and there could be no doubt that in a couple of hours we should be able to come up with it.

As to danger, we no longer thought of such a thing. Indians would scarcely be so daring as to assail us within sight of the train. Had it been night, we might have reasoned differently; but under the broad light of day, we could not imagine there was a prospect of danger. We determined, therefore, to ride direct for the wagons, without making halt.

Yes—one halt was to be made. I had promised the *ci-devant* soldiers to make *civilians* of them before bringing them face to face with the escort; and this was to be accomplished by means of some spare wardrobe which Wingrove and I chanced to have among our packs. The place fixed upon as the scene of the metamorphosis was the butte, which lay directly on our route.

As we rode forward, I was gratified at perceiving that the wagon still remained in sight. If it was moving on, it had not yet reached the head of the valley. It may have been halted, to receive some repair? So much the better: we should the sooner overtake it.

On arriving at the butte, the white canvas was still visible; though, from our low position on the plain, only the top of the tilt could be seen.

While Wingrove was unpacking our spare garments, I dismounted, and climbed to the summit of the mound—in order to get a better view. I had no difficulty in doing this—for, strange to say, a trail runs over the Orphan Butte, from south-east to north-west, regularly aligned with Pike's Peak in the latter direction, and with the Wa-to-yah or *Spanish Peaks* in the former!

But this alignment was not the circumstance that struck me as singular, a far more curious phenomenon came under my observation. The path leading to the summit was entirely clear of the granite blocks that everywhere else covered the declivities of the mound. Between these it passed like a narrow lane, the huge prisms lying on each side of it, piled up in a regular trap-like formation, as if placed there by the hand of man!

The latter hypothesis was out of the question. Many of the blocks were a dozen feet in diameter, and tons in weight. Titans alone could have lifted them.

The summit itself was a table of some twenty by forty feet in superficial extent, and seamed by several fissures.

Only by following the path could the summit be reached without great difficulty. The loose boulders rested upon one another, in such fashion that even the most expert climber would have found difficulty in scaling them; and the stunted spreading cedars that grew between their clefts, combined in forming a *chevaux de frise* almost impenetrable.

I was not permitted to dwell long on the contemplation of this geological phenomenon. On reaching the summit, and directing my telescope up the valley, I obtained a tableau in its field of vision that almost caused me to drop the glass out of my fingers.

The whole wagon was in view down to its wheel-tracks; and the dark forms were still around it. Some were afoot, others on horseback; and a few appeared to be lying flat along the sward. Whoever these last may have been, I saw at the first glance what the others were. The bronzed skins of naked bodies—the masses of long sweeping hair—the plumed crests and floating drapery—were perfectly apparent in the glass—and all indicating a truth of terrible significance—that the forms thus seen were those of savage men! Yes, both they on horseback and afoot were Indians, beyond a doubt.

And those horizontally extended? They were white men, the owners of the wagons!

This truth flashed on me, as I beheld a fearful object—a body lying head towards me, with its crown, of mottled red and white, gleaming significantly through the glass. I had no doubt as to the nature of the object—it was a scalpless skull!

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ONE of the chief subjects talked about since the House of Commons broke up for their holidays, is the new project for bringing the electric telegraph into general use within the limits of London. Our skyward view is indeed intersected by lines of wire stretched in sundry directions; but as it costs from L.60 to L.70 a mile to set up a wire, the number of persons who are willing to add that amount to their business expenses is but few. Another objection is the necessity for having a clerk specially trained to manipulate the instrument and send the messages. The new project includes the formation of a company who, as yet in their preliminary state, hope to render the telegraph available to all classes of Londoners at a reasonable rate. They propose to lay a bundle of perhaps a hundred wires underground along some of the principal thoroughfares and through the parks, which will be more convenient and economical than carrying them through the air; and from these buried wires, lines will be carried across the house-tops wherever required. Still further to facilitate operations, they will hire houses in suitable situations as supports for the air-lines, and build proper places on the roofs for the protection and attachment of the wires; and having done this, the houses will be sublet, subject to access by the telegraph company. This arrangement will enable them to sell the exclusive use of a wire for one-sixth of the charge which must, under present circumstances, be incurred. Besides this, they offer an important advantage by making use of Professor Wheatstone's instruments, which, by the simplicity of their construction, obviate certain serious objections made against the use of the telegraph on the score of expense. One of these instruments is described as the automatic telegraph; the other, the universal telegraph. The latter is the most useful for short distances—say, one to three miles—and it is so easy of manipulation, that any intelligent person may send a message by it, though previously untrained to telegraphic manipulation, for it is merely a small circular box, shewing all round its edge the extremities of a series of keys which operate similarly to the keys of a pianoforte. Each key is inscribed with a letter of the alphabet, and ten others are set apart for the numerals 1 to 9 and 0—hence it is easy to send a message by touching key after key with the finger according to the letters which spell the words. The receiver of the message reads it off from a small dial-plate, of the size of an ordinary time-piece, on which the hand points to the several letters as fast as they are touched by the distant sender; and if the sender knows how to spell, there seems but little chance of making a mistake.

The current which actuates each of the above-mentioned telegraphs is magnetic, not galvanic, hence no batteries are required, and the instruments are in consequence surprisingly portable. The Emperor of the French used them at the battle of Solferino; and as one man can carry the pair of instruments, and another can push the truck which bears the reel of wire, it will be seen that this simplified form of telegraph is well adapted for field-service. At Chatham, on one occasion, twenty-five fuses were simultaneously fired at two miles' distance by this little instrument. Ere long, we shall hear of its having been taken into use by volunteer rifle-shooters, by surveyors, by police autho-

rities, and the coast-guard. A nobleman, who resides five miles from Dundee, sends his orders to tradesmen in the town by one of these instruments. The mercantile portion of the community may now avail themselves of the telegraph to any extent. Our government authorities are using the instrument at home, and sending it out to the colonies; it is in daily use at the London Docks, and at docks on the Surrey side of the Thames. In the West India Docks, a different system is used, which involves an annual expense of L.200 for a royalty on batteries, and the employment of special clerks. The line from the Houses of Parliament to the Queen's printers, in Fleet Street, is worked by this new telegraph, and any M.P. may, if he pleases, spell out his message for himself without taking the clerk into his confidence. What a convenience it will be when messages can be sent at small cost and at any moment to all parts of London! Take one particular only: the possibility of inquiring before setting out whether the person you wish to see is at home or not—and in this one we see a saving of time to thousands of persons every day.

To pass to another subject: it is with no little pleasure that we invite attention to the formation of a *Society for the Acclimatisation of Animals, Birds, Fishes, Insects, and Vegetables*, for, if properly guided and supported, such a society may work and co-operate beneficially, not only for England, but for every country of the globe. We have repeatedly noticed in the columns of this *Journal* the labours of the Société d'Acclimation of France, and we hope to aid ere long in making known the proceedings of the society on this side the Channel. For the present, we announce that they start with a distinguished list of patrons, and a council which includes the names of naturalists well known for their love of science—Tegetmeier, Waterhouse Hawkins, with the Hon. Grantley F. Berkeley as vice-president; and Mr F. T. Buckland as secretary, whose studious activity in behalf of natural history has won him the favour both of savans and of the public.

Of course, members are wanted: membership for life may be secured by a donation of L.10, or yearly, by a subscription of L.2, 2s., payable to the secretary at the offices 346 Strand, London. The purposes of the society, as set forth in the prospectus, are: 'The introduction, acclimatisation, and domestication of all innocuous animals, birds, fishes, insects, and vegetables, whether useful or ornamental—The perfection, propagation, and hybridisation of races newly introduced or already domesticated—The spread of indigenous animals, &c., from parts of the United Kingdom where they are already known, to other localities where they are not known—The procurement, whether by purchase, gift, or exchange of animals, &c., from British colonies and foreign countries—The transmission of animals, &c., from England to her colonies and foreign parts, in exchange for others sent thence to the society—The holding of periodical meetings, and the publication of reports and transactions, for the purpose of spreading the knowledge of acclimatisation, and for inquiry into the causes of success or failure.' The purposes look promising. We think them especially worthy the attention of landowners, as parks, moorlands, plains, woodlands, farms, poultry-yards, gardens, ponds, rivers, and the sea-shore may become more profitable, useful, or agreeable through the operations of this society.

Encouraging proof of what can be accomplished is shewn in the interesting letter addressed to the *Times* by Mr Wilson, who is known as the Australian acclimatiser; and we cannot conclude our notice of the new society better than by a brief summary of his information. He tells us that nearly three hundred llamas and alpacas have been conveyed from South America to New South Wales and the colony of Victoria, and as there are 980,000 square miles of grazing-ground in our antipodal possessions, there is

little doubt but that the animals will find localities suited to their habits. What a prospect is thereby opened of abundant export of llama and alpaca wool within the next twenty years, as well as of merino, for which Australia is already famous! The alpacas have multiplied since their arrival in the colony; deer and hares have also been introduced; and encouraged by this success, Mr Wilson and his friends made an attempt to introduce the salmon into the colonial rivers. They raised 1,600, and sent out 30,000 ova bedded in gravel, and with a stream of iced water constantly flowing over them; but the vessel, though a clipper, had a tedious voyage, the ice failed, and the ova consequently perished. This failure, however, is to be taken as experience, and an indication of the amount of difficulty to be overcome, and the attempt will be renewed; and as a nursery is already prepared in one of the southern rivers of Tasmania, we may perhaps hear, within the next five years, that the Tasmanians are eating native salmon. Meanwhile, the carp and goldfish have been introduced into the lagoons and 'water-holes,' and from Mauritius a supply of the gouramier, a fish originally from China, and described as 'the very best fresh-water pond-fish in the world.' The first experiment with this last, however, proved a failure.

English pheasants are now so numerous in Australia that the colonists can breed as many as they want; the same will shortly be the case with partridges; the peacock is acclimatised, and now breeds wild in the bush; and English song-birds have taken so kindly to their southern habitation, that many a settler may fancy himself at home once more as he listens to their warbling. There appears to be but little difficulty in the transport of birds, and Mr Wilson says: 'I have good hopes of taking out every English song-bird of any value, one after another, and giving each one a chance of shewing how far it is capable of adapting itself to a new country, and a new set of circumstances.' There is at least one songster which the colonists may send us in return, the magpie or pied crow, which has 'a note so rich, and wild, and clear, that it would be a great addition to an English park.' The kangaroos brought to the Zoological Gardens have bred; and the black swan appears to thrive as well in our rivers as in those of Australia.

If, as Geoffroy St Hilaire says, there are 140,000 different kinds of animals in the world, the resources for interchange are indeed great; and England, with her many colonies and wide-spread commerce is, of all countries the one best fitted to take the lead in carrying out the views of the Acclimatisation Society. —We see from the foregoing particulars how much can be accomplished on a small scale by private enterprise. How much more, then, when every colony and every civilised country shall be co-operating in the work! And as regards the actual transport, we have Mr Wilson's testimony as to the way in which difficulties are lessened. 'Whatever I have requested,' he says, 'has been granted most cheerfully by all to whom I have applied, and—excluding, of course, the alpaca and salmon, which involved very considerable space and expense—I have never been asked for one farthing for freight or passage for any of the things I have sent out or received in return. Messrs Gibbs, Bright, & Co., James Baines & Co., the Peninsular and Oriental Company, Messrs Green, and, above all, Messrs Wigram, have vied with one another in their willingness to assist, and have laid me under deep obligations by their hearty co-operation. And so with captains, mates, &c. Every sailor likes a pet, and my pheasants, fish, and song-birds have been nursed on board these ships with a tenderness worthy of Miss Nightingale.' Let us add to this, that equal willingness has been shewn by individuals in this country to receive and nurse foreign birds and animals through their first stage of acclimatisation. Lord Hill, in particular, has shewn in his breeding-grounds at Hawkstone Park,

Shropshire, how the strangers may be successfully accustomed to the new circumstances.

A few items of news are worthy of notice as interesting to geographers: Messrs Grant and Speke are on their way to, if not already arrived, in North-eastern Africa, there to accomplish new explorations—A government steam-sloop, the *Pioneer*, of 350 horsepower, and especially fitted for service in Dr Livingstone's expedition, has sailed for the Zambesi—Hayti is commencing to bore artesian wells in her droughty districts—Important to mariners is the result of Captain Denham's survey of Eastern Australia, in the *Herald*: one of his special objects was to examine the region of the great reefs for a safe and navigable channel in that dangerous latitude; and it is now announced by authority, 'that a ship from the southward has only to be placed in 24° S. 157° E., and a clear passage of 150 miles wide, free of current, with a flowing south-east trade-wind, will lie before her for the 1100 miles to the Raine Island entrance to Torres' Strait.' The courses which she will have to steer through all the route are clearly defined; hence this discovery is one that will facilitate the fast increasing traffic along that remote eastern route.

A writing instrument for blind persons has been recently invented by the Rev. G. Wardlaw, M.A., residing at Helensburgh, Dumbartonshire, which he regards as peculiarly convenient and effective for such as are able to handle the pen with ordinary facility. Having nearly lost his sight by amaurosis, he contrived the instrument for his own use, and recommends it to others. Providing a simple and complete direction for the hand, it leaves the pen at liberty, so that the writing is performed with the same freedom as in the penmanship of those who have sight. The hand passes and repasses the same line, resting in the natural posture on a broad sheath, under which the paper slides backward from the hand as line after line is written. The proper distance of each line is secured with mechanical precision by a series of notches in a central metallic ridge, upon which a small hammer works. The backward movement for each line is effected with instantaneous facility by a touch of the left-hand fingers.

TRIFLES.

Nothing so small that God has made
But has its destined end;
All in their turn His purpose serve—
All to His glory tend.

The grain of dust, to sight unseen,
With myriads may combine
To form a bulwark to the sea,
Its limits to confine.

The little drop of pearly dew
Which on the blue-bell lies,
May, in the sun's bright beams, appear
A rainbow in the skies;

Or else the trackless ocean main,
With others, form to share,
On which the ship, when homeward bound,
Some loving heart shall bear.

And thus the humblest of us all
God's instrument may prove,
To bless and shed o'er fellow-men
The bounty of His love!

F. D.

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